



## State Route 260

### Payson to Show Low Highway and Show Low to McNary to Eager Highway

**Location:** Globe District; Apache, Navajo County  
**Length:** 93 miles  
**Begins:** Heber (MP 305.67)  
**Ends:** Eager (Old SR 73) (MP 398.67)

Contemporary State Route 260 (SR 260) is a 193-mile long highway that stretches from Cottonwood on the west to Eager on east, linking the middle Verde River valley to the White Mountains via the Mogollon Rim. Portions of this now-continuous state highway are relatively new additions to Arizona's state highway system, whereas other portions are old roads dating at least as early as the Arizona Territorial Period (1863–1912). The oldest segments are along the margin of the Mogollon Rim near Heber and east.

construction crews to build a road suitable for mule-drawn wagons, one working from the east and the other from the west. Not surprisingly, Corydon Cooley, winner of the "Show Low" card draw and former Army scout, was one of the construction supervisors starting from the east. This section of the "General Crook Trail" built by Cooley and his crews between Show Low and Heber was added to the State Highway System in 1955 as SR 260.



*JB Robison and Earl Chestnut on McNary-Springville hwy [73/260], near McNary, March 17, 1935. Courtesy of the Arizona Historical Society / Tucson . PC 180, File 297 #0319.*



*McNary, AZ June 17, 1933. Courtesy of the Arizona Historical Society / Tucson . PC 180, File 242 #2233.*

In the summer of 1871, Arizona military commander General George Crook recognized that a road between isolated Camp Apache (south of modern Show Low and McNary) and well-established Fort Verde (modern Camp Verde) was necessary to deal with Apache raiding. He knew that a road along the rim of the Mogollon Plateau escarpment would shorten the distance between the two garrisons and seal off the northern escape routes of the Tonto Apache. In the fall of same year, Crook hired two

After the White Mountain Apaches agreed to live peacefully on a newly created Reservation in 1871, pioneer settlers moved into east-central Arizona looking for arable land and other economic opportunities. In the 1870s, a wagon road connected Fort Apache with suppliers of hay, food, goods, and equipment in non-Mormon communities to the north and east, such as Cluff Cienega (McNary) and Springerville. In 1928, when these roads became part of the State Highway System, the road between McNary and Springerville/Eager became part of SR 73. The Arizona Highway Department (Arizona Department of Transportation) renumbered this route SR 260 sometime after 1975.

In 1993, the state of Arizona designated a portion of SR 260 and its neighbors SR 261 and SR 273 as the White Mountain Scenic Road. This 67-mile loop and the 4.6-mile Greer Highway (SR 373) are gorgeous roads through the pine forests and open glades of the White Mountains.